THE EAST TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

(Temporary Name)

Volume 1, Number 1 Fall, 1987

HOWARD LAMBERT SUFFERS HEART ATTACK

by

Howard Lambert

On April 27, 1987, Howard Lambert, age 56, suffered a heart attack and returned to work on August 24, 1987. He has been in the ETSU Mathematics Department since 1968. Lambert had just finished playing in the softball game where the "Irrationals" had won an intermural championship. He pitched the game and hit two home runs; too much excitement for an old man. Lambert is now back at work and does not seem to be having any further problems.

FIRST ANNUAL HOMECOMING ALUMNI BREAKFAST SLATED

by

John Lamb, Jr. - Editor

According to the returned letters from alumni, there is enough interest in a homecoming alumni breakfast to give it a try this fall. It will be held at 8:00 a.m., Saturday, November 7, 1987, in the Bluebonnet-Pecan-Friendship rooms in the Sam Rayburn Memorial Student Center. If you would like to come to this event, please send in the form at the end of this newsletter indicating how many will be attending the breakfast by October 30, 1987. The cost is $5.00 per person. We will be through by 9:00 so that you can attend other homecoming activities.

MATHEMATICS FACULTY ACTIVITIES

by

John Lamb, Jr. - Editor

The mathematics department faculty for 1987-88 includes Stuart Anderson, Bill Aslan, Dale Bedgood, Archie Brock, Paul Chiou, John Davenport, Dennis Grantham, John Heath, John Lamb, Jr., Howard Lambert, Vance Underhill, and Sandra Wheeler. Besides teaching courses, some have been active in research and other professional activities.

Dr. Paul Chiou presented a paper on April 10, 1987 at The Third Annual Conference on Applied Mathematics titled "On the Choice of a Dirichlet Prior Distribution For Multinomial Distribution." He has also published an article in the October, 1987 issue of the IEEE Transactions on Reliability titled "A Preliminary Test Estimator of Reliability in a Life-testing Model."

Dr. John Lamb, Jr. presented a paper on January 21, 1987 at the annual meeting of the AMS and MAA titled "An Analysis of the Karajordanoff Angle Trisection Method." He also presented a paper at the annual meeting of the Texas Section of the MAA on April 3, 1987 titled "An Analysis of the d'Ocagne Angle Trisection Method." Dr. Lamb has published the following articles in 1987: "The Rug Cutting Puzzle" in The Mathematics Teacher in January, "Simplex Tableau Drudgery Removed" in School Science and Mathematics in February, "An Analytic Approach to the Nine-point Circle" in School Science and Mathematics in March and "Sometimes Two Wrongs Do Make a Right" in The Texas Mathematics Teacher with **John Davenport** in March.

ALPHA GAMMA ALPHA - PI MU EPSILON MATHEMATICS CLUBS ACTIVITIES

by

John Heath - Faculty Sponsor

The math clubs this year had a busy and active membership. The students who qualify for Pi Mu Epsilon are usually successful in many areas such as physics and computer science as well as mathematics, so many times the monthly meetings are sparsely attended, but the framework of the clubs has remained intact.

Officers for 1986-87 were Chris Sellers - President of Pi Mu Epsilon, James Epperson - President of Alpha Gamma Alpha, Sue Sanders - Vice President of both clubs and Robyn Whitfield - treasurer. Kevin Markham served as treasurer before graduating in December, 1986. Officers that have been elected for the 1987-88 school year are Stephanie Tyler - Pi Mu Epsilon President, Steve Reznik - Alpha Gamma Alpha President, Sue Sanders - Vice President of both clubs and Chris Sellers - Treasurer of both clubs. We are looking forward to a great year with these outstanding individuals in key positions.

DAVID AYRES SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

by

Stuart Anderson - Chairman
Scholarship Committee

The David Ayres Scholarship, a cash award of $500, was presented to two outstanding ET undergraduates this past year. James Epperson, Floresville Senior, received the honor for the Fall, 1986 semester. Stephanie Tyler, Sulphur Springs Senior, was the Spring, 1987 recipient. Both students are planning on graduate work in mathematics.

From the Department Head .....

by

Dale Bedgood

We are especially pleased to be able to produce the mathematics department newsletter. This first issue has been in the planning stage for several months, and we appreciate the excellent responses to our departmental alumni survey which helped us to finalize our plans.

This newsletter is for you, our department alumni, and we shall continue to solicit your thoughts, ideas and suggestions to help make it a more effective instrument of communications.

The Mathematics Department continues to be one of the larger academic departments at East Texas State University, with the second largest undergraduate enrollment, being outnumbered only by the Department of Literature and Languages. Mathematics is the fourth largest department overall.

One of the major changes to occur recently which affects many undergraduate students is the degree requirement of a mathematics course at the level of college algebra or above. You may recall that until recently a student could choose a course from the sciences, foreign language, or computer science rather than a mathematics course, and if one chose a mathematics course it might be a pre-college algebra course. The mathematics faculty has been advocating such a general studies requirement for several years.

A significant change was recently implemented in the requirements for the M.S. degree. All M.S. mathematics degrees require at least four courses from the principal areas of statistics (501-502), advanced calculus (511-512), complex analysis (538-539), and abstract algebra (543-544). The remainder of the courses are selected from a prescribed

list. Many of the M.S. degree students for years followed a similar program. We believe the new program requirements provide better preparation for the market place.

We want to encourage you to drop by when you are in the area, or on campus. We will look forward to seeing many of you at ETSU's Homecoming November 7, 1987.

MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT BASKETBALL TEAM FOR 1986-87

by

John Heath - Coach

The IRRATIONALS competed in an independent men's basketball league in January and February of 1987. They won two and lost three, which is considered a successful season when many team members are over 40 years of age! Team members were Stuart Anderson, John Davenport and John Heath from mathematics, Ben Doughty and Randy Dillingham from physics, Henry Ross from P.E., Wendell Edwards from accounting, Bill Oellermann from KETR Radio, Fred Russell from administration, Ronnie Davidson from the Zeppa Center, John Kersey from Economics/ - Finance and Bob Titus from Educational Media and Technology.

New Departmental Sectratry

by

Dale Bedgood

The Mathematics Department recently employed a new secretary, something uncommon for this department. Margie Wheeler began September 17, 1987 with her duties. Many of you will recall Linda Ebert who was our secretary from 1982 to 1987 and Marcia Lair from 1977 to 1982.

MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT SOFTBALL TEAM FOR 1986-87

BY

John Heath - Coach

The IRRATIONALS competed in the Men's Recreation League of the ETSU Intramural Softball program. In the round-robin league play they were 4-1 and in the playoffs won all three games to end up as league champions. Team members Stuart Anderson, John Davenport, John Heath, Howard Lambert, Vance Underhill and Paul Chiou from mathematics, Herb Hofer and Henry Ross from P. E., Bill Oellerman - KETR, Charles Goodall, Ronnie Davidson and Damon Miller from Zeppa, Gary Dean - University Christian Center, Mike Sampson - Elementary Education and Bill Webb - Sociology.

ALUMNI BREAKFAST RESERVATION FORM AND/OR NEWSLETTER NAME BALLOT

NAME: _____

STREET ADDRESS OR BOX: _____

CITY, STATE & ZIP: _____

PHONE: ( ) _____

Please reserve ____ places at the first annual mathematics alumni breakfast at $5.00 each.

TOTAL ENCLOSED: $ _____

My vote for the name of the newsletter is: _____

NEWSLETTER NAME CONTEST

by

John Lamb, Jr. - Editor

Several interesting names were suggested for our newsletter by those who returned the letter we mailed earlier this year. They are listed below. If you would like to participate in the choosing of a name, please vote for one of these names on the form at the end of this newsletter and send it in. The next newsletter will contain those names that received ten or more votes for your consideration. The suggested names are:

Sines and Functions
The Variable Truth
What Counts at ET
Mathematics and More
E+T+S+U = U
Projector
Alumni-matics
The Math Connection
The Common Denominator
ETSU Math Dept Now and Then
Numbers Etc.
Mathematics Alumni Newsletter
The ET Mathematician
Lion Math Newsletter
Log of ET Exes
The ETSU Mathemagician
The Numbers Game
Mathematics News From ETSU
Sine of the Times
Problem Solver
Number, Please
After Math.
Factors
Math Alum Report
MEPETS (Math Epistle of ETS)
ETSU Mathematics Newsletter
The Pentagram
The ET Equation
The ET Angle
The Triangle
The Matrix
News Cube
The Addition
The Math Addition
Doc Dale's Tales
Add On
Sheepskin
The Back of the Envelope
E.T.^{2}
Differentiator
E. T. Numbers
ETSU Math News
The Math Circle
The Math Connection
Transformations
AFTERMATH
The Times Table

BOOK REVIEW

by

Vance Underhill

Mathematics: The Loss of Certainty is a first-rate book by a noted author, Morris Kline, a prominent mathematician who is probably better known to the public as a critic of education in this country. Two of his previous books, Why Johnny Can't Add: The Failure of the New Mathematics and Why the Professor Can't Teach, stirred up a hornet's nest of controversy concerning both secondary and higher education.

Mathematics was published in 1980 (Oxford University Press) and so is not a very new book, but it is one which should be read by anyone even remotely interested in mathematics. It requires no technical background on the part of the reader, but the more familiar one is with mathematics, the more rewarding is the book. If nothing else, Kline provides a perceptive history of mathematics from the Greek period to the present.

One point which Kline makes quite forcefully is that most of the great mathematicians of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries searched for the mathematical laws of nature in what was almost a religious quest. Newton, possibly the greatest mathematician of all time, said "When I wrote my treatise about our system (The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy), I had an eye on such principles as might work with considering men for the belief in a Diety; and nothing can rejoice me more than to find it useful for that purpose." Newton expressed similar thoughts in many of his letters.

Another topic which Kline pursues at great length is how the superstructure of mathematics developed before the foundation was firmly in place — derivatives were commonly used for almost two hundred years before anyone knew what a real number was!

The nature of mathematical proof was irrevocably altered by the discoveries of Kurt Godel in the early 1930's. The "crisis" in the title of Kline's book refers to these events and to the methods of the four modern schools of mathematical thought (logicism, formalism, intuitionism and set-theoretic) in handling matters relating to proof and certainty in mathematics. In some ways the situation of mathematicians today is analagous to the Pythagoreans upon the discovery of incommensurable magnitudes. Many questions have been raised, but few have been answered.

In the last couple of chapters Kline has a axe to grind — the study of mathematics has strayed too far from the natural world. The discipline has lost its vitality by never-ending abstraction and generalization. The only really significant mathematics is that which is directly related to the physical world. Here his ideas are more subjective and quite controversial. Indeed, the whole book is somewhat controversial, and reviews have been mixed. It is a book you will thoroughly enjoy, whether you agree with the author's arguments or not.

ALUMNI INFORMATION

by

Dennis Grantham

We received many interesting letters from our alumni. We have excerpted a subset for this issue and intend to include others in future issues. If you have not sent in your accomplishments and wish to share them with the alumni, and if you wish to update your file send information to:

Dennis Grantham
Alumni News Editor
Math Department
East Texas State University
Commerce, TX 75428

Before 1960

Backus, Kerby D. BS (56), MS (62), EdD (68) Colorado State.
14808 Fireside Drive, Silver Springs, MD 20904
Married: Hortenze, 4 sons ages 20-24. After graduation he taught at Rice, since then he has been with NASA's Space Program.

Bullock, Velma Lucille Young
BS (55).
28 Willow Creek Circle, San Marcus, TX 78666
Married, 7 children
She has taught in the public schools and is currently teaching at Austin Community College.

Cheek, Henry Clay BS (25) MS (35)
2502 Bryan St. Commerce, TX 76528

Covin, Fred BS (29), MS (46)
408 Lafayette Street,
Pittsburgh, TX 75686
Married, 1 child.
He has been a high school principal and a superintendant and is currently a member of the board of directors of District VIII Education Service Center and serves on the State Retired Teachers Legislative Committee.

1960-1969

Argenbright, Harvey Stanford BS (68).
1006 N. Dr. Lucas Grapevine, TX
Married, 3 children
Mr. Argenbright is a pilot for Piedmont Airlines.

Ayers, David M. BS (66), MS (68)
3015 Tanglewood, Commerce, TX 75428
Married: Loretta Jean, 2 children
Mr. Ayers is self-employed in Commerce and is mayor of Commerce.

Bell, Walter L. BS (50) MEd (65)
PO Box 231, Broaddus, TX 75929
Married
Mr. Bell has taught math in Mesquite, Royce City, and Broaddus where he is now principal.

Farr, Phillip David BS (68)
2108 Monticello, Mesquite, TX 75149
Married: Mary, 3 sons
Mr. Farr is MIS Director for Fina Oil Co.

1970-1979

Alford, Larry Vaughn BS (75) MS (87) (Amber)
4308 Crestover, Mesquite, TX 75150
Married: Brenda, 1 daughter
Mr. Alford is a application supervisor for Mobil Oil Corporation, Dallas, TX.

Bryant Pamela (Powell) BS (76), MEd (78)
Rt 4 Box 451, Clarksville, TX 75426
Married: Paul, 1 child
Mrs. Bryant has taught elementary school for 11 years.

Skidmore, Marribess BS (75) MS (77)
220 Southwood Lancaster, TX 75146
Married: Tim, 3 children
Mrs. Skidmore is a part-time teacher at Cedar Valley Community College where she teaches computer science.

1980-1987

Beaird Charles A. BS (81)
8300 Skillman #601 Dallas, TX 75231
Mr. Beaird has worked doing off-shore seismic data collection for Geophysical Services (a Texas Instruments Subsidary)

Claxton, Mary Katherine BS (85)
Rt 2 Box 309 Celeste, TX 75423
Married, 2 Children
Mrs. Claxton has taught for Bland ISD.

Heimer, Delaine Rae (Mathison)
BS (85)
3858 Santa Monica, Abilene, TX 79605
Ms. Heimer has taught in the Abilene ISD since graduation.

Hooten, James Thomas, BS (87)
Rt 5 Box 150 A Greenville, TX 75401
Married: Cassie, 2 children
Mr. Hooten is attending Vanderbilt University studying for a Master's in Astronomy.

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East Texas State University
Commerce, TX 75428

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